CTAA
Connecticut Alternate Assessment
(Developed with NCSC)

Smarter Balanced
Assessment Consortium

CMT/CAPT
S C I E N C E

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

CSDE Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal (CT Portal)

The CSDE Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal (http://ct.portal.airast.org/) is populated with the 2015 Smarter Balanced assessment administration materials. The CT Portal is exclusive to the administration of Smarter Balanced assessments in Connecticut. It is recommended that all district staff members who have a role in the administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments bookmark the CT Portal. The CT Portal includes test administration materials for Test Coordinators, Test Administrators and Teachers, Students and Families, and Technology Coordinators. Staff may register for e-mail notifications by clicking on the "*Register for e-mail updates*" in the upper right corner of the Web site.

New Test Administration Materials on the CSDE Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal

- *Test Administration Quick Guide*: This document provides test administrators with the information needed to administer the Smarter Balanced summative assessments. It may be printed for use by test administrators. However, test administrators should also read the Test Administration Manual to ensure that all test administration and security protocols are followed.
- *Test Delivery System Brochure*: This brochure provides students with an overview of the Test Delivery System.
- *Technology Coordinator Brochure*: This brochure provides a quick overview of the basic system and software requirements needed to administer the online tests.
- *Updated Classroom Activities:* Smarter Balanced received a report that during the administration of some classroom activities, teachers and/or students were clicking on embedded URLs and visiting the associated Web sites. The purpose of including the URLs in the classroom activities is to properly cite the sources used for development. Since some Web sites may contain ads or other information not aligned with the purpose of the classroom activity, the live links were deactivated and a statement was added that the URLs are not intended to be part of the classroom activity administration. A total of six ELA classroom activities were affected. These classroom activities have been updated on the CT Portal.

Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual (TAM) and Test Coordinator Manual (TCM)

The Smarter Balanced TAM and the Smarter Balanced TCM are posted on the CSDE Smarter Balanced Portal. Paper copies of the TCM and TAM will be received by March 17, 2015, for most districts. Paper copies will be boxed by school and will include one TCM per school and one TAM for every 30 students. Districts will also receive a district overage box. These materials will be sent to the address in the MI Web Portal under the CMT DCV section for "shipping of test materials."

Test Information Distribution Engine and Public School Information System Data Sync

The CSDE has refreshed the student-level data in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE). The daily sync between TIDE and the Public School Information System (PSIS) Registration Module has been engaged. Please ensure that all changes to student enrollment and demographic information are made in PSIS. Changes made in PSIS may take up to 24 hours to appear in TIDE.

Any changes to a student's status at the time of testing should be made directly in the PSIS Registration Module. The PSIS Registration Module has been updated to include new fields for **Special Education, English Learner, and Economically Disadvantaged Status during testing,** so these fields can be modified to reflect a student's status at the time of testing.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS
March 13, 2015

2015 CMT and CAPT Science Online Supplemental (Pilot) Testing

Online supplemental (pilot) testing for the CMT and CAPT Science for students in Grades 5, 8 and 10 will occur between March 17 and April 17, 2015. This is one week later than originally planned. Both the start and end dates have been delayed in order to maintain a five-week testing window. CMT and CAPT Science online pilot testing will be conducted using the MIST system. Separate usernames and passwords from the live tests are provided for the science online pilot tests and are now posted on the [Measurement Incorporated (MI) Web Portal](). If you have questions about the MIST system, contact the MIST technical support desk at 1-866-691-1148. If you have questions about the 2015 CMT and CAPT Science online pilot test, contact Jeff Greig in the Student Assessment office by e-mail at [jeff.greig@ct.gov]() or by phone at 860-713-6890.

REMINDERS:

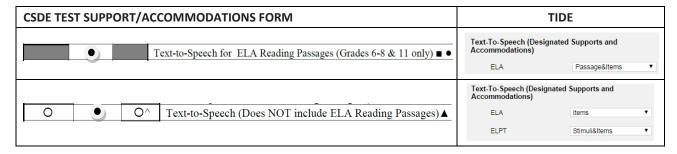### Arrival of Smarter Balanced Results

The CSDE anticipates scores to be available in the Online Reporting System (ORS) in July (no set date yet) after hand-scoring is completed. Paper individual student reports will be shipped later (most likely sometime in August) to districts for dissemination.

TIDE Information Related to Accommodations and Designated Supports

Districts cannot add or remove students from TIDE. Daily uploads from PSIS will automatically make changes in TIDE. The one time transfer of Embedded Designated Supports and Accommodations has been transferred to TIDE from the Accommodations Data Entry Web site. Non-Embedded Designated Supports and Accommodations were not transferred, but are captured on the Accommodations Data Entry Web site. It is not required that districts indicate these in TIDE.

There has been some confusion about Text-to-Speech for ELA. The chart below shows how the selection for ELA on the CSDE TEST SUPPORT/ACCOMMODATIONS FORM would look in TIDE:

CSDE TEST SUPPORT/ACCOMMODATIONS FORM	TIDE
● Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages (Grades 6-8 & 11 only) ■ ●	**Text-To-Speech (Designated Supports and Accommodations)** ELA · Passage&Items
○ ● ○^ Text-to-Speech (Does NOT include ELA Reading Passages) ▲	**Text-To-Speech (Designated Supports and Accommodations)** ELA · Items ELPT · Stimuli&Items

Parent Resources

The following resources can be used when communicating with parents and guardians about the Smarter Balanced assessments. These resources will help explain what parents should expect regarding this year's assessment results.

- a [template letter]() that reminds parents of the new tests and explains that the results will be different;
- a [template PowerPoint presentation]() to use at parent and community meetings or at local board of education meetings;
- a [handout for parents]() about the new tests that helps explain how the results will be different this year; and
- a [web-friendly version of the parent handout]() about the new test and the expected new results.

Classroom Activities Availability

Classroom Activities for the performance tasks will be assigned by school and grade within TIDE. Classroom Activities are posted in the [TIDE]() system. Specific information about the administration of Classroom Activities is included in the [Smarter Balanced TAM]().

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS
March 13, 2015

Smarter Balanced Recorded Webinars

Recordings of the webinar training sessions may be streamed online by selecting the appropriate link below. Please be aware that these are recordings of live sessions. Questions and concerns that were asked during the session may have already been resolved. Please check the FAQ page to view the most up-to-date information.

Webinar	Description
Technology Requirements (2-19-15)	This webinar provides an overview of the technology requirements needed on all computers and devices used for online testing, information on secure browser installation, and voice packs for text-to-speech.
TIDE and How to Start/Monitor Online Testing and Test Settings (2-19-15)	This webinar provides an overview and demonstration of the following systems: Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE), Test Delivery System (TDS), and Teacher Hand-Scoring System (THSS).
Online Reporting System (ORS) Webinar (3-5-15)	This webinar provides an overview of the Online Reporting System (ORS), including how to access and manage participation reports and score reports.

Changes to the Read Aloud non-embedded Accommodation for Grades 3-5
English Language Arts (ELA) Reading Passages

"Smarter Balanced uses evidence-based decision making practices throughout the test development process, which includes recommendations and decisions concerning accessibility resources. Discussions regarding read aloud/text-to-speech with a multi-disciplinary team of experts revealed that experts view decoding in Grades 3-5 differently. Although some experts view decoding as the interaction between the student and written text, other experts have a broader perspective. These other experts view decoding as the interaction between a student and information at large, which can include text, tactile, audio, gestures and other presentation styles."

- *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines (UAAG) based on the March 6, 2015, decision.*

- **Effective immediately, the Read Aloud non-embedded accommodation is allowed in Grades 3-5 for all ELA reading passages for the 2014-15 Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) administration.**
- For a student in Grades 3-5 to be considered for a Read Aloud accommodation, there must be documentation of the need for a read aloud for ELA reading in a student's 504 Plan or individualized education program (IEP). This accommodation should be recorded on page 8 of a student's IEP, Program Accommodations and Modifications, and should reflect the context in which the student currently receives this accommodation. For example, if a student uses books on tape, text-to-speech, or has any written material read aloud <u>and</u> these accommodations are documented in his/her current 504 Plan or IEP, the student would then be eligible for a Read Aloud on the 2014-15 SBA administration. If such accommodations are already documented on page 8 of the IEP, no IEP amendment would be necessary.
- This accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students who have print-related disabilities (estimated to be approximately 1-2 percent of students with disabilities participating in a general assessment).
- For the 2015 Smarter Balanced administration, the CSDE will capture this information ONLY on the CSDE Accommodations Data Entry Web site for students in Grades 3-5. If the student is registered for accommodations, follow these steps:
    1. Log into Accommodations Data Entry Web site.
    2. In **Student Search** type in the student's SASID.
    3. On the **Test/Support Accommodation Page** click on "Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages (Grades 6-8 & 11 only*) (S)(5)."
       *NOTE: Grades 3-5 **now** have access to this Read Aloud accommodation.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

March 13, 2015

- By June 2015 Smarter Balanced members will discuss the ELA Read Aloud non-embedded accommodation and evaluate the practicability of adding the embedded text-to-speech accommodation.
- Since text-to-speech is not available because of the lateness of this decision by the Smarter Balanced Governing States, only the Read Aloud accommodation will be available for reading passages. The implementation of this accommodation requires a certified educator to read over the Connecticut Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments, sign the Security/Confidentiality Agreement and fax (860-713-7030) it to the CSDE.

Please contact Joe Amenta at joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or
Janet Stuck at janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837) with any questions.

NCSC/Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA)

The secure portal to access the NCSC Assessment System is open. Eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities who are registered for this assessment through the CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) entry on the CSDE Accommodations Data Entry Web site will participate in Language Arts and Mathematics assessments beginning March 30, 2015. These assessments must be completed by May 15, 2015. Please note the following resources related to the NCSC/CTAA:

- NCSC Test Administration Manual provides administration information for both Test Coordinators and Test Administrators.
- NCSC-CTAA Overview summarizes some critical components of the NCSC-CTAA and provides a description of the test sessions.
- NCSC Sample Items Overview 2015 is a presentation with notes describing sample items and the test structure for the NCSC assessment. Test Administrators will be able to access these sample items within the test platform once they login to work with their students.

A letter was sent to all District Test Coordinators from Janet Stuck on March 6, 2015, requesting a response by **March 15, 2015**, regarding Special Form Requests for students in Grades 3 and 4 who respond with Braille or non-verbally, as well as students in all grades who are Blind, Deaf or Deaf-Blind in order to provide the secure document *Procedures for Assessing Students who are Blind, Deaf, Or Deaf-Blind: Additional Directions For Test Administration*.

AIR Smarter Balanced Help Desk

The AIR Smarter Balanced Help Desk is available at 1-844-202-7583 and CTHelpDesk@air.org. The Help Desk Call Center is open Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.